

Message Text

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21

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TAGS: PFOR, EAIR, WB, US, UK, GW, FR

SUBJECT: AIR FRANCE'S ROLE IN THE IGS

REF: A. BONN 5121 B. BERLIN 631

1. DURING TRIPARTITE MARCH 26 BONN GROUP CAA DISCUSSION OF IGS MATTERS FRENCH REP DE BOISSIEU ASKED WHAT WOULD BE US AND UK REACTION TO A GREATLY INCREASED AF PARTICIPATION ON THE IGS AS FOR EXAMPLE THE INTRODUCTION OF 25 NEW SERVICES IN THE LATE FALL. IN RESPONSE TO EMB ASST CAA'S QUESTION DE BOISSIEU SAID THE IDEA UNDER CONSIDERATION WOULD INVOLVE AF BERLIN SERVICES TO STRASBOURG, SAARBRUECKEN, DUSSELDORF, BRUSSELS, AND GENEVA, ADDING THAT AF WOULD, OF COURSE, NOT WANT TO FLY TO ALREADY WELL SERVED DESTINATIONS SUCH AS FRANKFURT AND MUNICH. BRITISH REP SAID THAT SINCE THE RATIONALIZATION PLAN PRESENTLY UNDER CONSIDERATION WAS FOR THE PURPOSE OF REDUCING CAPACITY, THE INTRODUCTION OF ANY NEW IGS SERVICES WOULD REQUIRE THE AIRLINES TO REASSESS THE ENTIRE SITUATION. US REPS MADE NO SPECIFIC COMMENT EXCEPT

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TO EXPRESS INTEREST IN ANY FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE

PROPOSAL THE FRENCH MIGHT WISH TO PROVIDE.

2. COMMENT: WE ARE INCLINED TO VIEW DE BOISSIEU'S REMARKS IN THE CONTEXT OF A POINTED REMINDER THAT BERLIN CIVIL AVIATION IS A TRIPARTITE RESPONSIBILITY. HIS PRINCIPAL TARGET WAS CLEARLY THE BRITISH AS EVIDENCED BY HIS STATEMENT THAT AF WOULD NOT WANT TO COMPETE ON TWO OF PAA'S MOST IMPORTANT ROUTES. WE SEE LITTLE ECONOMIC BASIS FOR THE SERVICES SUGGESTED BY DE BOISSIEU, E.G. SAARBRUECKEN HAS BEEN PROVEN TO BE AN UNECONOMIC ROUTE, EXCEPT PERHAPS IN THE CASES OF BRUSSELS AND GENEVA. INTRODUCTION OF THE LATTER SERVICES, HOWEVER, APPEARS INCONSISTENT WITH EARLIER EXPRESSED FRENCH CONCERNS RE THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS VIS-A-VIS THE SOVIETS OF EXPANDING BERLIN'S INTERNATIONAL SERVICES. DE BOISSIEU HAS LONG HELD THE PERSONAL VIEW THAT AF SHOULD ENLARGE ITS IGS ROLE SO HIS PRESENT REMARKS MAY CONTAIN AN ELEMENT OF WISHFUL THINKING. WHILE WE ALSO DO NOT THINK MUCH WILL COME OF THE IDEA, WE WILL BE ALERT TO ANY FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS. IN ANY EVENT, THE BRITISH HERE APPEAR TO TAKE THE MATTER RATHER MORE SERIOUSLY THAN WE THINK IS WARRANTED AT PRESENT.
HILLENBRAND

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